

TENNESSEE FOLKLORE SOCIETY  
BULLETIN

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Athens, Tennessee

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## The Tragedy of "Mary Moore"

By Joseph Donehew

The full tragedy of "Mary Moore" is not felt by the folk of East Tennessee who remember and tell her story. Smiling curiosity still attends the discussion of her eccentricities and speculation on her death. Yet if her "quareness" has made her a part of the unwritten lore of the valley, an underlying pathos has humbled by attempt properly to exalt "the falling leaf, the fading tree" and "Mary Moore".

Her real name was Rinda Bailey, and she appeared to have no known relatives. Her visit to Union County occurred regularly twice a year according to a fixed schedule which some say took her as far as the Atlantic coast. She traveled on foot, rarely accepting transportation, and she was never turned away from a fireside.

How clearly do I see her, bundled in all of the clothes which she owned, as she heavily ascended the path from our spring house in the early morning mist. How often have boys hidden among the hedge-rows to watch her scatter oddly shaped sticks and stones along her way! Who still remembers her jumbled cant while gayly plucking Devil's Brush and Buttercup? And what suppressed glee when she would laugh and merrily whirl her flowing garb in simulation of long-gone youth.

A strange mystery enveloped the past of Rinda, the wanderer. She seemed to tread a consciousnessless course, oblivious to taunting or probing, like an aimless rivulet far from the fountain head from which it sprang. Her form was drawn; her features noble, though marked by years which were numberless. Only once do I know that she mentioned her youth. "Old John Bailey was

mean to me," she vowed to my grandmother.

But Rinda is gone. No preacher blessed her sleep. No  
tear-drop kissed her grave. Yet I must write an epitaph.

Mary Moore

Where is the grave of Mary Moore,  
By Nollchucky's lonely shore,  
Or does a hemlock guard her sleep  
Beneath a Shenandoah steep?

How often in my infancy  
Did Mary Moore look down on me:  
A smile, a tear and then ere long,  
The remnant of an ancient song.

'Twas early spring in meadow-rue,  
And in the autumn's twilight due,  
When on our valley's heathered floor  
Tread soft the form of Mary Moore.

Now standing by a trellised vine  
In tattered shawl and dresses nine:  
No stubborn gate resents her hand  
In this or any alien land.

With steady foot and gnarley cane  
She takes the garden path again,  
An ageless knock now at the door,  
An apparition: Mary Moore.

"How old are you, say, Mary Moore?"  
Her cant came back in witches' lore:  
"As old as milk that's in the spring,  
Or any song I want to sing."

"Why do you travel, Mary Moore?"  
I asked her once, but nevermore:  
Some silent grief fell shadow-borne  
On beauty bowed to sorrow's scorn.

They said she married well-a-day,  
But in the shrinking moon of May  
When lilies by the old church door  
Bowed down for purist Mary Moore.

How soft and lovely then her face,  
A child unversed in courtly grace,  
But separated from her kin:  
Refined in streamlet, cove, and glen.

O Mary Moore, you never weep  
As from some bier you haunt my sleep:  
A silence hides your treasure store  
Of love short-lived with Johnny Moore.

And now I wonder where you tread  
In autumn's soft, sweet-smelling sod  
When father said, "It's haying moon,  
And Mary's late; she'll be here soon."

But when the hay was gathered in,  
And corn lay golden in its bin,  
No Mary prodded through the mist  
To make the fires and turn the grist.

What mountain piper lent its call,  
Which fading leaf sustained the fall,  
When faltering through the rain, they say,  
Her steps drew short and lost their way?

Where is the grave of Mary Moore,  
Beside Watauga's murky shore?  
Or do Uncle's lofty peaks  
Entomb the vale where Mary sleeps?



## Before You Call Your Doctor

By Ruth W. O'Dell  
Newport, Tennessee

1. To settle 'sick-stomach' take a peach tree limb, scrape it downward, meaning toward the root of the tree, boil the scraped bark and drink the water.
2. To relieve children of worms, give them candy.
3. To relieve a cold, boil prickly ash roots into a tea and drink.
4. To cure a baby of hives, a tea is given made from ground-ivy.
5. To relieve "heart-burn", carry a calamus root and eat from it at intervals.
6. To make a poultice for boils, make a mulch from the inside bark of a slippery elm. It is boiled in the preparation.
7. Golden seal is eaten for sore mouth.
8. Black-berry root tea is used for 'bowel ailment'.
9. For snake-bite, especially a copper-head snake, catch a toad-frog, and while it is still alive, jerk it in two and place over the wound. It will draw the poison out quickly; if this is impossible, cover the wound with salt.
10. To stop nose-bleed, hold hands high over head and have someone wet back of neck with cold water.
11. To relieve a bruise, wash the affected part in vinegar and bind with brown paper.
12. To relieve a bad cold, drink burned whiskey. Put a flannel cloth on the chest after greasing the cloth with tallow and sprinkling it with equal parts of a mixture made of turpentine, lamp oil, and camphor. Take a hot foot-bath and go to bed.
13. To relieve frostbite of the feet, place them in a basin of water and slowly add wood ashes.
14. To cure hiccoughs, take nine sips of water — no more, no less.
15. To cure the itch, take a bath in water in which poke root has been boiled.
16. To relieve rheumatism, boil wild-cherry bark and drink the tea. If this fails, make pokk-berry wine and drink it. \*

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\* Many old people raised herbs for tea. Polly Lucy Fisk went to the homes of sick people and made herb teas until they were well. A Harned woman nurse did the same thing.

17. Let a dog lick bad sores that will not heal.
18. Apply tobacco juice for insect stings.
19. To prevent diseases, wear asafoetida around the neck.
20. To cure a cow of hollow-tail, put salt in the cut, and bind. This will kill wolf in the cow's back.
21. To cure an ingrown toe-nail, soften with mutton tallow.
22. To cure "founder" in a cow, give her a quart of linseed oil, and follow with two bottles of castoria.
23. Take tea as a tonic; also rub the plant on body for chiggers.
24. To cure thrash in a child, secure a straw from the bedding underneath a horse and place the straw beneath the child's tongue.
25. To cure Botts (in horses), wet your hands, use them both to rub the horse from head to tail. Repeat a certain verse of scripture (unknown). When you get to the tail, jerk it. Do this three times, slap the horse on the breast near its heart, and in thirty minutes the horse will be well.
26. To cure thrash, let a person who has never seen his own father blow in the child's mouth.
27. Use scraped Irish potato for all sorts of eye infections.
28. Put mildew in a syrup for a cough.
29. Drink mint-leaf tea for a sick stomach.
30. Drink tea for flu.
31. Peel bark for medical use from south side of a tree on the north side of a hill.
32. Apply an onion poultice for bronchial trouble.
33. To relieve congestion of the chest cavity, make a mixture of turpentine lampoil and camphor mixed in a base of mutton tallow. Apply to a flannel cloth, and heap upon the chest.
34. Biscuit saturated with hot milk makes a good drawing poultice.
35. To purify the blood, make a tea by boiling the root of sarsaparilla and drink as a tonic.
36. To relieve earache, apply a poultice made by mixing catnip with meal, applying it while hot.
37. To relieve stomach ache, chew calimas.
38. To relieve flux, swallow raw white of egg sprinkled with spice.

39. To remove warts, rub them each way three times with a pin. Put the pin away for three weeks and the wart will disappear.
40. To make a spring tonic, mix wild cherry bark, May apple bark, poplar root, and butterfly root to clear the blood.
41. Catnip is good for lumbago and the kidneys.
42. Liquor in which rock candy is crushed is effective for a cold or for a sore throat.
43. Blood root is effective for chicken cholera.
44. Turpentine and brown sugar mixed are good for lumbago.
45. To relieve a cut finger, apply milkweed juice in a mild form.
46. Goose grease and mutton tallow make a good base for a salve or a poultice.
47. To draw a boil to a head, apply the skin from an egg.

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UNCLE TONY'S RECIPE FOR COOKING 'POSSUM\*

Go out in de woods and catch a nice fat 'possum and take 'im home, put on a pot o' wettah an' heat it jes like you wuz gwine to clean a pig, an' when it git hot fling in a shovel o' ashes an' dip 'im in it an' den you scrapes all de hair an' fur off 'im an' fix him jes like a little pig, 'cept you splits 'im open an' spreads 'im out flat. Den you hangs 'im in a tree two or three nights an' he's ready fur de oven. When you goes to cook 'im, lay 'im flat on de bottom an' fill 'im with slices of sweet 'tater an' put mo' all round 'is sides. Den you sets 'im over de coals an' kivvers 'im wid a hot lid an' cooks 'im mighty slo' till he dun good an' tender. De flavor of de 'possum goes inter de 'tater, an' de flavor of de 'tater goes inter de 'possum, an' it's jis good 'nuff to make you lick yo' fingers.

Compliments

Uncle Tony

\*The above item is contributed by John F. Stewart of Red Bank, Tennessee, the origin of which he explains as follows: "A very good friend of mine lost his mother recently. While they were sorting out her belongings, his wife ran across a cook book that she had used all her married life. The book dates back beyond 1893, but we cannot find any copyright date in it; however, she had clippings pasted in it which were dated in 1893. Uncle Tony's Recipe for Cooking 'Opossum is in the meat section of the book."

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## Pioneering Accounts of Frontier Religion

By E. E. Rogers  
Tennessee Wesleyan College

Ministers and missionaries have always occupied the leading vans of the pioneering caravans. It was none the less true when that great period of migration started over "Boone's Trail" and "The Wilderness Road."

I wish to speak directly of one William Osteen who was one of the great leaders of the Methodist Church west of the Alleghanies during the period of the settlement of Middle Tennessee and especially of the counties of the eastern portion of the central basin. But let us go back a little.

Most Tennesseans know of the great work of William McKendree who, with James Otey, was one of the first Bishops of the Methodist Church to labor west of the Alleghaney Mountains. He was the third bishop from John Wesley. It was he that established the present well-known McKendree Church in Nashville, living at Gallatin at that time, and who licensed William Osteen to preach. But let us take our account from a contemporary and from which original material this transcript was made which information is now in the hands of Mrs. Leonard Harris of Beasley, near Chapel Hill, Tennessee, from which we quote:

"We thank God that our excellent Bishop, the third from Wesley, still lives and moves in the purity of a high example among us. Mr. McKendree's labors in this great vale commenced in the year 1800. How many wonderful events since that date have convulsed the world! The race of Napoleon from 1800 to 1813 was like the course of 'Death on a Pale Horse,' as he terribly and sternly rode over the necks of kings. The careers of Castlereigh and Canning, two illustrious statesmen, have commenced and ended since Bishop McKendree crossed the



mountains on his great errand for the Lord in 1800. Byron, the Napoleon of poetry, has, within the same period, burned out in the flames of his volcanic passion the brief taper of his existence and allied his name to an immortality, as that of Napoleon was to the principles of freedom. But still our Bishop, as calm as the going down of the autumnal sun, is with us after having achieved under the precious blessings of heaven a work that spreads its moral efficacy all along the vale in which an empire is cradled. Who, but the Heavenly Father that sent him out to the Western World, shall recall him hence? And to whom does this proud dust belong but to the proud West, the wide field in which he labored?

"He was born and educated in the state of Virginia; he was admitted to the ministry in the same state in the year 1788, and was ordained to the office of Bishop in the year 1808. The fact that he is yet alive (age 78) and is able from time to time to show his venerable form in the pulpits, is the more remarkable when the early trials and sufferings of the wilderness ministry are considered. There are some older men in the United States who preach from Sabbath to Sabbath; yet, perhaps, these men never slept out of a comfortable bed a single night in their lives. They never made their tea at nights in the deep shades of the unbroken wilderness, and then slept upon the ground until morning, encountering rivers,<sup>1</sup> rains, tempests, and the danger from wild beasts, and the wilder Indians."

The following is a copy of a license to preach issued by William McKendree to Edward Osteen,<sup>2</sup> the original being held by

1. Mrs. Leonard Harris says he is known to have made the journey up Duck River from the Cumberland River.
2. A grandson of Edward Osteen living near Unionville, Tennessee, remembers many incidents of personal interest connected with this renowned ancestor. Mrs. Harris is a descendant of this family.



Mrs. Harris: "Know all men by these presents that I, William McKendree, one of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, under the protection of Almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory, by the imposition of my hands, and prayer, have this day set apart Edward Osteen for the office of a deacon, in said Methodist Episcopal Church, a man whom I judge to be well-qualified for the work; and I do hereby commend him to all whom it may concern, as a proper person to administer the ordinances of baptism, marriage, and the burial of the dead, in the absence of an Elder, and to feed the flock of Christ, so long as his spirit and practice are such as to become the gospel of Christ, and he continue to hold fast the doctrine of sound words according to the established doctrines of the gospel.

"In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this tenth day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty three.

"Done at Puleski )  
Tenn. Ave. Confe.)

W. McKendree

Wax Seal"

In 1826, Dr. William Green had started to a camp-meeting at Winchester, Tennessee. He says, "I met a good congregation at Poplar Creek, and preached on the subject, 'The wicked is driven away in his wickedness.' After the sermon fifteen or sixteen penitents came forward. I appointed a meeting at night at Brother Yarbrough's. We had a crowded house and I preached ninety minutes. At the close of my discourse there was a general weeping and shouting all over the house. There was a large number standing in the door whom I saw weeping and paying very close attention. At last one fell full length on the floor and cried for mercy. When I called for mourners, there were thirty or forty came forward. I labored

with the mourners until exhausted.

"At the close of one year's labors I received two hundred and thirty five into the church and turned out twenty.

"A lesion of fair fame that never healed was committed when a young preacher repeated a sermon. Those one hundred and fifty new sermons were a necessity just as imperative as the making of bricks in Egypt, and he patiently went to work and made them. Verily a crocodile, after gulping down a fat pig, does not more quietly close his eyes and throw up his jaw ready for another, than some of our kind-hearted laymen who, having devoured a flaming sermon on a hot July morning, returns in the evening and calmly and placidly look up for another. All that we have to say is, 'Let them have it; if they can stand it, we can'."

The first act of worship by any pioneering group upon reaching a new territory was to establish a church. Coming up Duck River and Rock Creek through heavy forests and dense canebrakes into what was then Bedford, now Marshall, County, a bold group of devout Presbyterians built homes in the small clearings which they made and erected the first church of any denomination within the limits of the county. In fact this was one of the very first churches established in that part of Tennessee known as the Cumberland Settlements. A presbtery consisting of twenty eight persons was formed for this area, being a part of the Transylvania Presbtery of Kentucky which itself was a part of the Abingdon Presbtery, and which originally had charge of the entire church west of the mountains. A marker on a large stone standing within the corner of the churchyard tells the story:

June 1st 1810  
On This Spot Was Preached  
By Rev. Samuel ley  
The First And Organization Sermon

-  
of Bethrebel Church  
from  
"Upon this rock I will build my  
church, etc."

Rev. Charles Cummings and Rev. John Rhea who accompanied Col. Christian on an expedition against the Cherokee Indians south of the Little Tennessee River were the first ministers in Tennessee. Rev. Samuel Dock then came over preaching in Washington and Sullivan Counties. He also established a Presbyterian school known as the Academy. This was contemporary with the migration of emigrants for the Cumberland Settlements. As late as 1830 there were only one hundred churches and seventy one ministers. The Rev. Samuel Finley of our story came to this settlement from Kentucky and preached the organization sermon before the church-house was built. The first minister to serve this church was the Rev. John Gillespie in 1811. Rev. Thomas J. Hall then served from 1814 to 1849, living in the community. Rev. Hall is remembered as having "a surrey with a fringe on top" and drawn by one horse.

The present frame structure supplanted the primitive log church in 1832. Mrs. Ross Wood of Palmetto, Tennessee, possesses the only known replica of the original structure, which is in the form of a drawing. The Rock Creek Sunday School was organized in 1827.

In the cemetery near the church are graves with markers bearing dates of pioneers born as early as 1731, long before the Declaration was signed or before Tennessee became a state. These are principally the graves of the Erwins, the Applebys, and the Billses, and a few of their adventurous neighbors. Directly in front of the church is the original Erwin home. It was, in fact, James A. Erwin who built the house, and who gave the land for the erection of the original Bethrebel Church. The present owner of the nearby home on the Erwin Revolutionary War tract is Calvin Erwin to whom the property

has descended in direct line. The original Erwin home served as an inn for travellers over the trail between Shelbyville and Columbia, being midway between them. Travelling preachers on the frontier found hospitality here.

Mr. Erwin recalls an incident of how the pioneer home was located. Being necessary to build near a spring, it had been decided to build the house a short distance from its present location; but while Mr. Erwin was scouting around through the woods, his dog turned over a stone which went splashing into some water which, upon investigation, was found to be a perpetual stream. Near the home soon stood the old "threshing house" for grain. This was used by the neighbors. When the grain was harvested, the neighbors would gather in a "working" and beat the grain out with "fleils." About a mile away on Rock Creek is today lying in the bed of the creek the old millstone belonging to one of the first grist mills established in this section of the country, being built by Allen Loeper about 1815. The mill was last operated by Sam Giles, father of Clarence Giles who for more than thirty-five years operated the old mill similar to this on Duck River more recently the property of Ex-Governor Henry H. Horton, known as the Wilhoite property.

The timbered lands in this section were said to be the very finest to be found anywhere in the whole country. They lay between East and West Rock Creeks and along Duck River a few miles north of Lewisburg. The growth included oak, poplar, ash, elm, linden, beech, locust, cherry, walnut, sugar tree, hackberry, buckeye, cedar, hickory, and chestnut. Some of the best of this cedar was rafted down the rivers to be used as piling in preparation for the building of New Orleans. Quite recently Mr. Erwin cut some of the large trees near the church to find deep within the wood pegs that had



driven into holes bored in the wood (perhaps burned), as hitching places for those who rode horses long distances to attend the old campmeetings. Some of the last remaining "campmeeting pens" have rotted down within the memory of Mr. Erwin. These were temporary log pens rudely built to provide comfort and shelter for those coming long distances to attend the old time revivals. Many of the trees contained large spikes made on the anvil by some blacksmith and driven into the tree for the convenience of hitching. When these trees were later cut as mill stock, they could not be sawed into lumber because of these unsuspected spikes deep within the hearts of many of the trees.

As one treads the sacred ground within the cemetery or about this church, his thoughts imbibe some of the spirit of that Lapland youth whose "thoughts were long, long thoughts." The voice of the past seems to speak with an accent that is strange but meaningful. And it seems that one can hear again the axe ringing in the deep shades of the forest primeval as these sturdy pioneers raised their rude houses round by round in the clearing.<sup>3</sup>

These frontier ministers often had their problems. "Father Axley, after upbraiding his audience for many things that he said he did not mean to speak of got to this point, 'The thing that I was going to speak about is chewing tobacco. Now, I do hope, when any gentleman comes here to church, who can't keep from chewing tobacco during the hours of public worship, that he will just take his hat, and put it before him, and spit in his hat. You know we are Methodists. You all know that our custom is to kneel when we pray. Now, any gentleman may see in a moment how conceivably inconvenient it must be for

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3. "Bethberei (House of My Creation" taken from Legends of the Southland by the author.



a well-dressed Methodist lady to be compelled to kneel down in a great puddle of tobacco spit." Judge White of Knoxville, who told this story, said that he threw away his large cud of tobacco as quickly as he could and refrained from its use thereafter.<sup>4</sup>

Speaking before the students of Emory College of Oxford, Georgia, in 1904, (now Emory University, Atlanta), H. M. Hamill gave us the following picture of the last of the old campmeeting revivals in the South. "Down in the straw, at the mourner's bench of the Old South campmeeting, some of us got our theology and our religion. The Bible, in miracle and prophecy, was handled by reverent hands, and made most real to us as the infallible word of Almighty God. The law of Sinai, with unexpurgated blessings and curses, was read to us amid the groanings of our troubled consciences. No ear so polite, no position so exalted, but a living and burning hell was denounced against its meannesses. As deep as the virus of sin in our souls sank the flashing, two-edged sword of the Spirit. The wound was made purposely deep and wide that the balm of Gilead might enter and heal the utmost roots of sin. There was no lifting of the finger tip, daintily gloved and decorous, in a token of desire some time or other to become a Christian. Cards, in colors, bearing name and rates of the evangelist, agreeing to meet everybody in heaven, were not passed around for signatures.

"I never heard the old hymns of invitation, that lured many a hardened sinner of the Old South, as they were sung under the leafy arbor of the flickering lights, after a weird, unearthly stirring of our hearts by the man in the pulpit, but I think of a great criminal lawyer, who for many years had led the bar of his state, and made mock of God's Book, and Church, and ministers. He

4. Gallaher, The Western Sketch Book, Boston, 1850, 175.

owned an old carriage driver who was one of God's saints in black, gray-haired and patient 'Uncle Aleck,' who had mourned and prayed over his unbelieving master. 'Uncle Aleck,' he said to him one day, 'why do you believe in a book you can't read, and a God you never saw? I have thousands of books in my library, yet I care nothing for religion.' Uncle Aleck's only reply was to put his hand on his heart and say, 'Marse John, I've been faithful to you all these years, ain't I, marster?' 'Yes.' 'And I never lied to you or disobeyed you, has I, Marse John?' 'No.' 'Then, marster, it's my religion that has made me what I am. I can't read, I can't see God, but I know the Lord Jesus Christ here in my heart.' Drawn by some spell he could not resist, the great lawyer came to the old camp ground and heard the awefully solemn message of the preacher with bowed head and heart full of trouble. When the hymn was sung,

Come, humble sinner, in whose breast  
A thousand thoughts revolve;  
Come, with your guilt and fear oppressed,  
And make this last resolve,

I shall never forget the startled look of the preacher and the people as straight to the mourner's bench sped the lawyer, crying in agony as he fell on the ground, 'Send for Uncle Aleck!' And down in the straw white-haired Old Aleck wrestled with God for Marse John, until a great shout went up from mourner and congregation as the master hugged the old darkey and the darkey hugged his master, saying, 'I knew it was coming, Marse John.' You will pardon a man whose head is growing gray if at times the heart grows hungry to turn back and see and hear the old sights and sounds of God's presence and power as revealed especially at the ancient and nearly extinct campmeeting." 5

## PAW'S TALE\*

A very strange tale told to me,  
Took place in Sweetwater, Tennessee.  
'Twas at a flour mill to the city near  
That was ravaged by witchcraft, terror, and fear.  
Three watchguards of the mill were lost,  
Could not be found at any cost.  
When night had come and darkness reigned,  
Their hearts were filled with much disdain.  
For others had gone one by one,  
Taken away to a world unknown.  
In vain they searched for a watchman brave,  
To offer security their mill to save.  
Then came one man thus instilled  
To risk his life from being killed.  
He stayed that night, to voices hearkened,  
His soul awake and hatchet sharpened.  
After a while he heard a noise,  
His conscience clear and body poised.  
Then over the floor there came a cat,  
Then two, then three - and all were black.  
The fourth came in and at him leapt,  
He held his ground and distance kept.  
He saw the cat in fearful awe,  
And with his hatchet cut off its paw.  
Then back to the vision the watchman came,  
From a form of a cat, name by name.  
There was an old lady living nearby  
Sitting in a chair gave a mournful cry.  
Her arm was soaked with a stream of blood  
Coming from her veins in a gushing flood.  
The brave man heard the news with awe  
And hurriedly came to return her paw.  
This broke the spell, the man set free,  
A cat form to such a witch as she.  
The men are happy, no joy denied,  
And all for the best the witch had died.

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\* Provided by Leon Thurston of Sweetwater, Tennessee, and now  
in the collection of E. G. Rogers.

### Tales My Grandmother Told Me\*

The following account, told to me by my grandmother and verified by other members of the family, is supposedly a true happening concerning the strange behavior of an ancient family clock at the death of my grandfather.

This particular clock, handed down from generation to generation for over a hundred years, was a large, wooden-framed affair with a long pendulum which swung rhythmically to and fro, insuring perfect time to the second.

The numerous engravings on the glass face, the delicate hand carving on the wooden parts, and the old styled Roman numeral lettering on the dial gave the clock an unforgettable, stately quality.

It had been given to my grandfather by his father, and at my grandfather's death was supposed to be given to one of his sons, who in turn would hand it on down to one of his male children. This, according to the legend of the clock, was the only way of acquiring ownership — that it be handed down from father to son.

It so happened that none of my grandfather's children wanted the clock — in fact none of them would take it. The situation stood thus at the last illness of my grandfather in 1924.

While lying on his death-bed he again tried to persuade one of his two sons to take the clock, care for it and carry on the tradition. Neither would consent to take it.

\* From the collection of E. G. Rogers and contributed by Earl Lock-miller of Athens, Tennessee, under the above title. The reader will note the similarity of this legend to the folk-music version of "Grandfather's Clock."



On January 16, 1924, he called for a change in his will. At the stroke of midnight, on this same day, he started drawing his last breath. As this ancient clock began tolling the twelfth hour, his life began ebbing slowly away. When the clock had tolled twelve times, my grandfather was still fighting for breath — but the clock did not stop striking. It continued to strike until he had drawn his last breath. The clock had struck twenty-four times — then completely stopped running.

Later, at the reading of the will, it was learned that the change he had made was that his wife was to keep the clock. Coincidence? Maybe. Here is a chain of mysterious events: his death came the day the will was changed — the clock had never been known to strike more than twelve times — it stopped at the very second of his passing away, although fully wound — it has never run since his death — all these facts cause one to wonder where to draw the line between coincidence, unexplainable events, and superstitious belief. At any rate, it is a strange occurrence.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Members of Tennessee Folklore Society:

Let me use this way to express my appreciation for the honor you bestowed upon me at our annual meeting by electing me to be your president. Thank you also for the efficient officers you elected to serve with me. I hope we can carry forward the attainments of our predecessors. We shall need the help and advice of each member to participate in our next program or to suggest the names of those who have something to contribute to folklore collection.

More often through our folklore than through historical facts can we understand the character and background of our country or of any country. Levette Davidson at the meeting of the Modern Language Association in New York in December, 1950, expressed in a speech, "Needed Regional Studies of American Authors," the need for studying the background of different sections of our country. He stressed the West, and discussion leaders presented other regions. Our folklore collections fit into any study of regional authors and material.

Let each one of us be alert for Tennessee material in a similar way to that in which such members as Mrs. McDonald, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Boyan, and Mr. Boswell have contributed in the field of music and other members through their contributions to our Bulletin and to radio and other programs.

Your officers need your help. Please write either Mr. E. G. Rogers at Athens, Tennessee, or me at Peabody College, Nashville 4, Tennessee, if you have some folklore material to present at our annual meeting next fall or know someone who has. This meeting will be held at Austin Peay College where your vice-president, George Boswell, teaches.

Sincerely yours,

Freida Johnson

## Notices and Announcements

A Bibliography of North American Folklore and Folksong by Charles Haywood has just recently been announced. This work is the effort of some twelve years of research and deals with practically every known phase of folk interest. Herbert Halpert of this section is a contributing editor. The price is \$27.50 and may be purchased from Greenberg: Publisher, 201 East 57th Street, New York 22, N. Y.

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On our desk has been received Publicaciones Del Instituto Ethnologico Nacional, Bogota, entitled "Las Piedras De Tunja De Pacatativa Y El Cauternario De La Sabana De Bogota."

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An exchange publication, Hoosier Folklore, Volume IX, Number 4, announces its discontinuance under its present title and states that in March, 1951, a new journal, Midwest Folklore, will assume the responsibilities heretofore carried out by Hoosier Folklore.

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Send your subscription for the Southern Folklore Quarterly to The Editor, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida. The rate is \$3.50.

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Edwin Brookhart, accomplished head of the music department of McMinn County High School, appeared for a program of folk songs before the Athens Rotary Club on March 26. He accompanied himself on a guitar - mandolin while he sang "Poor Wayfaring Stranger", "Black Is the Color of My True Love's Hair", "Red Rosey Bush", "George Buck Is Dead", "On Top of the Smokies", "See Me 'Cross the Water," and "Cindy." Professor Brookhart is a pupil of Charles F. Bryen of Peabody College.

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### BOOK REVIEWS

William B. Hesseltine, Confederate Leaders in the New South, Louisiana State Press, Baton Rouge, 1950, \$2.50.

The perspective of history is sometimes kinder than the surging and backwash of the concourse of events as they pour through the crucibles of time. So it seems now as any attempted evaluation is made of the resurgence of Confederate leadership in the attempted reconstruction of the South following the War Between the States. Mr. Hesseltine has ably outlined in Confederate Leaders in the New South a panorama of action and ideas which even Southerners have been inclined to overlook where they are identifying progress with leadership. When again one questions what happened to some 525 top-ranking Confederate leaders when they put their gray uniforms and sabers by, the author forcefully brings forth many of the answers. Not that these leaders always agreed in principle, even upon the battlefield, but they were very effectively at work, each in his own way, at the huge undertaking of reconstructing the resources and fortunes of the South.

Two ideologies marked this philosophy of cultural reconstruction - that of Jefferson Davis "who never advised Southerners to wear the yoke of their Yankee conquerors," and Robert E. Lee "turning his energies, his talents, and his prestige to building the New South." General Lee believed that the issue of the conflict were settled upon the battlefield, and was willing to take up there; but extreme also were leaders like General Early who were politically unregenerate, or those who took oaths of a nifty in order to ingratiate themselves, to rebuild their personal fortunes and those of their neighbor. These 525 top leaders found many places of usefulness: They furnished 292 lawyers, 193 planters or farmers, 75 railroad officials, 39 merchants, 34 industrialists, 25 insurance men, and 23 bankers. Among this top list were religious and educational leaders who kept political and religious ideas alive and leant toward the culture of the Old South, while business men as a rule followed closely in the camp of Lee and Logan. Governor John C. Brown of Tennessee ameliorated certain economic and political differences for the favor of Northern Capital and became known along with Mumford of Virginia as a builder of the South.

E. G. R.

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George O. Robinson, Jr., The Oak Ridge Story, Southern Publishers, Inc., Kingsport, Tennessee, 1950, \$3.50.

The Oak Ridge Story is "the saga of a people who share in history," and is presented in a style which the layman as well as the most informed scientist may appreciate. The author who came to Oak Ridge as public relations director of publicity releases now tells this story of the excitement, anxiety, mad-haste, immensity, confusion, heartache, and secrecy which attended the construction after September 19, 1942, of this project by 110,000, 000 construction workers at a cost of \$98,000,000 over a three-year period a city of gigantic proportions. And yet this miracle per-

formance in building and engineering construction is incident to the main purpose of producing the atomic weapon in time for its use in World War II. The screen of secrecy was lifted by President Truman in August, 1945, when these bombs were dropped on Japanese cities. The constant vigilance surrounding the enterprise can best be appreciated from the chapter in this source, "They Couldn't Say A Word."

That part of the story which tells of the construction of plants for the obtaining of uranium - 235 by the gaseous diffusion method, the electromagnetic process, and later the thermal diffusion method, could be highly technical. The author, however, keeps his narrative directed to the casual reader as he portrays in the background the magic growth of the "gateway to the world." Oak Ridge occupies a large portion of two counties — Anderson and Roane. There are streets, circles, and roads, but no city blocks in the usual sense. There are 200 miles of streets and 800 busses carrying 120,000 passengers per day. The city operates its own 35 miles of railroad, crew of 105 switchmen, etc., and 3,000 cars of materials which are constantly moving. There are 35,000 housing units. The staggering greatness of this enterprising community recalls the remarks of a neighboring farmer who witnessed the transformation of this area, and remarked, "I had in mind that whatever it was that the Government was making over there, it would be cheaper to go out and buy it."

E. G. R.

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Janice Helt Giles, Miss Willie, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1951, \$3.00.

Miss Willie is Janice Gile's second book dealing with the people of the Kentucky hill country, her first being titled These Enduring Hills. We would place this volume in a category with Backwoods Teachers and The Thread That Runs So True which appeared last year and which still hold high ranking in professional literature. Miss Willie, however, presents a new slant to this pedagogical thinking which appears to be a qualifying characteristic of the treatment in this author's style — the ever-constant reorientation of Miss Willie's own personal concept of values toward these Ridge people until finally she can teach them because they can accept her love and concern for them.

The story briefly has to do with Miss Willie's decision to leave the school in El Paso, Texas, at the invitation of a relative, to teach a Ridge school in the backwoods of Kentucky. She accepts the responsibility in a full knowledge of the obstacles with which she is to be confronted, yet in a hope that she may be able to make the children of this community over according to her own high concepts of idealistic teaching. She was practical and wise enough, however, eventually to accept the people for what they were — their quaint ways, their simple-mindedness, their beliefs and superstitions, and their love for these hills of their forefathers. When she could love them for what they were, even Rube Pierce, her problem pupil, was willing to accept her, not only as his teacher but as the wife



of his father who found in the little teacher that which filled the void in his loneliness. The story is one of stark realism mixed with descriptive passages at times which are truly and poetically beautiful.

E. G. R.

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